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## XVIII.—ARISTOTELIAN ‘MIMESIS’ IN EIGHTEENTH CENTURY ENGLAND

Of the many disputed terms in the *Poetics*, *μίμησις* “imitation,” has always been one of the most fruitful of discussion and of misconception; and these misconceptions are particularly significant because, for whole periods, they were potent in moulding creative activity not only in literature,<sup>1</sup> but also in painting and in music. When “imitation” is considered in the light of its technical use in Plato and in Aristotle, its real meaning emerges with some distinctness.<sup>2</sup> Far from the naturalistic theory of a direct and slavish copy of objects and actions, Aristotle’s *μίμησις* is a distinctly idealistic conception, and signifies “creating according to a true idea.”<sup>3</sup> Thus, when we are told that Art imitates Nature, “Nature” is not a particular thing or act, but is the creative force of the universe.<sup>4</sup> With this conception, we can justify Aristotle’s declaration that music is the most imitative of all the arts: it is the most fluid; and its flux is governed most completely by the universal laws of unity, proportion, and symmetry. The conception is almost Platonic; and it makes Aristotelian *μίμησις* appear in a sense almost diametrically opposed to the common meaning of the Latin *imitatio* and the English “imitation.”

<sup>1</sup>Saintsbury has pointed out the prevalence of literary imitation in his *History of Criticism*, sub Bysshe.

<sup>2</sup>It must, however, be admitted that Aristotle is not perfectly consistent—or that the scribe has not reported faithfully. On one occasion, he seems to include narrative as an “imitative” art, and, on another, to exclude it. See I. Bywater, *Aristotle on the Art of Poetry*, Oxford, 1909, 100-101.

<sup>3</sup>S. H. Butcher, *Aristotle’s Theory of Poetry and Fine Art*, London, 1902, 153.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, 116.

English critics of the Seventeenth Century, however, following the Italian and French Aristotelians, translated *μίμησις* as "imitation"; and, moreover, they argued, since Homer and Virgil give us a perfect view of "Nature methodized," let us copy them instead of Nature. Thus *μίμησις* was burdened with two false meanings, one making it a copy of actions and things, the other a copy of accepted masterpieces.<sup>5</sup> Until the latter part of the century, both these false meanings passed current in England as vulgate Aristotelianism, and indeed did some injury to the fame of their supposed author among critics of a semi-Romantic stamp. The editors of the Greek text<sup>6</sup> who, one might suppose, would have corrected the error, give it at least tacit support<sup>7</sup>; and the translators regularly render *μίμησις* as "copy" or "imitation." An anonymous English version through the French of Dacier,<sup>8</sup> which held this field alone until 1775, excepted only Bacchic songs from the general idea of copying; and the fact that music had to be made an exception, whereas Aristotle found it the most imitative of all the arts, shows how far "imitation" had wandered from its original meaning. A first-hand knowledge of Aristotle, even in translation, seems to have been exceptional: Walpole mentions him five times in his letters—usually coupled with Bossu and the "Rules"<sup>9</sup>;

<sup>5</sup> On Imitation in Seventeenth Century England, see W. G. Howard, *Ut Pictura Poesis*, *Publ. Mod. Lang. Assoc.*, xxiv, 44; I. Babbitt, *The New Laokoon*, Boston, 1910, 12; Gregory Smith, *Elizabethan Critical Essays*, Oxford, 1904, I, xxxviii; J. W. Bray, *History of English Critical Terms*, Boston, 1898, 160 ff.; and J. E. Spingarn, *Critical Essays of the Seventeenth Century*, Oxford, 1908, I, xlviii ff.

<sup>6</sup> For a list of these, see Schwab's *Bibliographie d'Aristotle*, Paris, 1896.

<sup>7</sup> Cooke's ed., Cambridge, 1785, is quite definite, iii.

<sup>8</sup> *Aristotle's Art of Poetry*, London, 1709.

<sup>9</sup> Horace Walpole, *Letters*, Toynbee ed., Oxford, 1903, iv, 398; vi, 201; viii, 176; x, 132; xii, 359.

and Cowper, at the age of fifty-three, had "never in his life perused a page of Aristotle."<sup>10</sup> The *Poetics* were much revered, but little read; and the interpretation of *μίμησις* depended almost altogether upon secondary sources. Some writers in fact seem to have used it without any thought of an Aristotelian origin.

The dictionaries shed very little light upon the subject: even Dr. Johnson gave no meaning that approximates the Aristotelian sense.<sup>11</sup> Writers on rhetoric and the severer critics of poetic theory, when they had occasion to treat of "imitation" at all,<sup>12</sup> regularly interpreted it as copying. Bysshe urged the "superior Mind" to "generous Emulation" of Shakespeare, Milton and Dryden, and, by way of auxiliary, appended "A Collection of the Most Natural and Sublime Thoughts," codified in convenient form.<sup>13</sup> Constable advised imitation of the ancients;<sup>14</sup> and the anonymous author of the *Prousiones*, writing with Aristotle directly in his eye, unquestionably takes "imi-

<sup>10</sup> William Cowper, *Letters*, ed. Wright, London, 1904, II, 196.

<sup>11</sup> Johnson's *English Dictionary*, London, 1755. He gives three senses: the "act of copying, attempt to resemble"; "that which is offered as a copy" (the quotation from Dryden shows that he means this to include literary "imitation"); and "a method of translating looser than paraphrase, in which modern examples and illustrations are used for ancient, or domestic for foreign." Later dictionaries quote Johnson.

<sup>12</sup> Many of them seem to have taken it so completely for granted that they ignored it. William Walker, *Rhetoricae libri duo*, London, 1672, 162, discusses it only as a figure in oratory. Charles Butler, *Rhetoricae libro duo*, London, 1684, leaves it out entirely. So also do William Dugard, *Rhetorices Elementa*, London, 1721, 1741, etc.; and John Ward, *De Ratione Interpugendi*, London, 1739.

<sup>13</sup> Edward Bysshe, *The Art of English Poetry*, 4th ed., London, 1710. See title page.

<sup>14</sup> John Constable, *Reflections upon Accuracy of Style*, London, 1731, 81.

*tatio*” to mean “*copy*.”<sup>15</sup> As late as 1785, moreover, Owen translated *Juvenal* in order that “the young scholar” might learn to superadd his “spirit” to the “correct and graceful ease” of Horace.<sup>16</sup> “Imitation” in the sense of copying was the common conception that the age gleaned from its dictionaries and rhetorics, as well as from the commentators and translators of Aristotle. The rhetoricians, moreover, regularly accepted it as a copy of models, enjoined it in the school-room, and so moulded the taste and the creative production of the age. Very truly did Hurd declare: “The most universal cause, inducing *imitation* in great writers, is the force of early *discipline and education*.”<sup>17</sup>

Many writers on æsthetic theory, moreover, especially in the earlier part of the century, advocated “imitation” in the sense of copying models. Felton’s *Dissertation on the Classics*, which appeared in 1709, and passed into its fifth edition in 1753, discussed “imitation” in the sense of free translation, and then added that “more properly,” it meant “proposing some excellent Writer for a Pattern, and endeavoring to copy his Perfections in the most distinguishing Parts of his Character.”<sup>18</sup> Gildon in his

<sup>15</sup> *Prolusions Academicæ*, Oxon., 1765. The author’s attitude toward imitation seems inconsistent. He seems opposed to it as contradictory to divine inspiration; but, on the other hand, he declares: “*Perversa nullorum Imitatio cum chamæleonte comparatur*.” p. 89).

<sup>16</sup> Edward Owen, *The Satires of Juvenal*, London, 1785, *Preface*.

<sup>17</sup> Richard Hurd, *A Discourse on Poetical Imitation*, Works, II, 217. For the relation of “imitation” to the theory translation in the Eighteenth Century, see an article by the present author in the current volume of *Neophilologus*.

<sup>18</sup> Henry Felton, *A Dissertation on Reading the Classics and forming a Just Style*, 5th ed., London, 1753, 146. For an extended treatment of Felton, see R. S. Crane, *Imitation of Spenser and Milton in the Early Eighteenth Century: A New Document*, *Studies in Philology*, xv, 195 ff.

*Complete Art of Poetry*, declared Aristotle to be based on "Reason, Nature, and the Practice of the Ancients;" apparently one is to imitate the ancients, and follow the rules derived from their work.<sup>19</sup> Lord Lansdowne actually thought that Nature might be imitated by following the rules of Mulgrave and Roscommon.<sup>20</sup> Even in the latter part of the century, there are examples of this point of view. Stockdale distinguished "imitation" from plagiarism,<sup>21</sup> by declaring that an imitation was an "improvement" of the original.<sup>22</sup>

But more important than the force of tradition and the influence of the schools and of the critics was the actual example of recognized authors. According to Johnson, the copying of literary models started with Oldham and Rochester, and was "Pope's favorite amusement."<sup>23</sup> Swift, in *The Art of Sinking in Poetry*, casts satiric shafts at the "universal genius" who "pours forth five or six epic poems with greater facility, than five or six pages can be produced by an elaborate and servile copier after nature or the ancients."<sup>24</sup> Most of Pope's best work, from the *Essay on Criticism* down through the *Epistles*, imitates Horace. Johnson imitated Juvenal; and the *Georgics* and *Eclogues* of Virgil furnished models for the mob of gentlemen who wrote with only too much ease. Many

<sup>19</sup> Charles Gildon, *Complete Art of Poetry*, Dialogue II (1718) in Durham's *Critical Essays of the Eighteenth Century*, New Haven, 1915, I, 73 ff.

<sup>20</sup> Lord Lansdowne, *Essay upon Unnatural Flights in Poetry*. See Gildon's *Laws of Poetry*, London, 1721, 345.

<sup>21</sup> William Lauder in his *Essay on Milton's Use and Imitation of the Moderns*, London, 1750, fastened a bad sense on imitation.

<sup>22</sup> Percival Stockdale, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Genuine Laws of Poetry*, London, 1778, 76.

<sup>23</sup> Samuel Johnson, *Life of Pope*, Works, Oxford, 1825, VIII, 295.

<sup>24</sup> Jonathan Swift, *Works*, Edinburgh, 1814, XIII, 43.

of the leisure class translated and paraphrased the classics for enjoyment; and many respectable clergymen and teachers did so for either pleasure or patronage. Example was further enforced by numerous *obiter dicta*. Steele advised imitation.<sup>25</sup> Pope praised Virgil for imitating Homer;<sup>26</sup> and, in the *Preface* to his own *Poems*, he says:

All that is left us is to recommend our productions by the imitation of the Ancients: and it will be found true, that in every age, the highest character for sense and learning has been obtain'd by those who have been most indebted to them.<sup>27</sup>

Even Joseph Wharton, who belongs to an opposing school, allowed a place to literary imitation.<sup>28</sup> Mason declared that the aspiring author is "to take the best models of antiquity for his guides; and to adapt those models, as near as may be, to the manner and taste of his own times."<sup>29</sup>

During the earlier half of the century, *μίμησις*, interpreted as a rather servile copy, sometimes of Nature, more frequently of approved masterpieces, largely dominated English letters. It had been ingrained by a long tradition; it had been fortified by the laxity of the lexicographers and the Aristotelian commentators, by the formalism of the rhetoricians and the schoolmasters, and by the subtle but powerful conditions of book-selling and literary patronage. But literature cannot live indefinitely upon its

<sup>25</sup> *The Guardian*, No. XII, in Durham's *Critical Essays of the Eighteenth Century*, New Haven, 1915, I, 295.

<sup>26</sup> Alexander Pope, *Preface to the Iliad*, *Works*, London, 1757, VI, 303.

<sup>27</sup> Alexander Pope, *Preface to Poems*, *Works*, ed. cit., I, xv.

<sup>28</sup> Joseph Warton, *Essay on Pope*, London, 1806, II, 36.

<sup>29</sup> William Mason, *Works*, London, 1811, II, 180. By a stroke of irony, Mason prefixed to his *Works*, I, 2, a quotation from the Greek of Dionysius to the effect that copies can never be equal to their archetypes. (See Dion. Halicar., *περὶ Δελφάρχου*, *Opuscula*, Leipzig, 1899, I, 307.)

own vitals. Rymer and Bysshe at the very opening of the century brought the theory of imitation to the *ne plus ultra*; and Pope accomplished in practice the last refinements of literary copying. The later Neoclassicists acknowledged Pope as their master; but his very superiority obliged them to differ somewhat from the detail of his practice: thus reaction became a fact in literature not only with Thomson, Young, Gray, Beattie, Mason and the pseudo-romanticists of the mid-century, but even with men like Churchill, Colman and Lloyd, in subtle matters of diction, versification, and trope.<sup>30</sup>

The reaction of the theorists against "imitation" is foreshadowed even in the Seventeenth Century. Shaftesbury, in his *Tò Καλόν* put Beauty on a par with the Good; he declared, moreover, that nothing was "so improving, nothing so natural, so congenial to the liberal arts, as that reigning liberty and high spirit of a people, which from the habit of judging in the highest matters for themselves, makes them freely judge of other subjects."<sup>31</sup> Such an æsthetic criterion has nothing in common with the copying of models; and Shaftesbury's influence was powerful for many decades.<sup>32</sup> Hutcheson, who popularized and at-

<sup>30</sup> See, for example, J. M. Beattie, Jr., *The Political Satires of Charles Churchill, Studies in Philology*, xvi, 303 ff. Beattie points out that Churchill forsakes the finished artfulness of Pope's versification for the more robustious, freer style of Dryden. Of course, the present paper makes no attempt to cover in any definite or detailed fashion, the actual literary imitations of the Eighteenth Century. The object is merely to note the explanations and applications of Aristotelean *μίμησις* and to explain somewhat the influence and vogue of each interpretation.

<sup>31</sup> Lord Shaftesbury, *Second Characters or the Language of Forms*, ed. B. Rand, Cambridge (Eng.), 1914, 23.

<sup>32</sup> For the tracing of this influence on the purely literary side, see C. A. Moore, *Shaftesbury and the Ethical Poets of England, 1700-1760*, PMLA., xxxi, 264.



tempted to systematize his work, freed himself largely from Aristotle, and declared that there were two sorts of beauty, "absolute" and "relative," the former beautiful because of the "Uniformity in the object itself," the latter, because of the "Resemblance to some Original." In the former class, he put geometrical and mathematical figures,<sup>33</sup> music, architecture, gardening and rural nature, with its plants and animals.<sup>34</sup> Only to the second type of art did he allow the applicability of "imitation."<sup>35</sup> Thus he limited the term, and denied its universal dominance.

Various foreign influences, moreover, especially French, contributed to the movement. Abbé du Bos made "imitation" apply only to the "artist without genius:" it might make him correct, but could not make him great.<sup>36</sup> Estève broke away from the imitation of models to fall into the slavish mimicking of external Nature;<sup>37</sup> he is, however, sentimental enough to submit all writing to "vérité du

<sup>33</sup> By implication, he includes Moorish arabesques and other non-pictorial designs.

<sup>34</sup> Francis Hutcheson, *An Inquiry into the Original of our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue*, London, 1725, 15-37. He allows sculpture also to be an absolute art in so far as it concerns itself with proportion of parts rather than the copying of an original. Hutcheson's distinction is a sound one, although he does not always apply it accurately in matters of detail.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 39-40.

<sup>36</sup> Abbé J. B. du Bos, *Critical Reflections on Poetry, Painting and Music*, tr. into Eng., London, 1748, II, 43-5. *Ed. princ.*, Paris, 1719, anon. For the relation of du Bos to the history of criticism, see A. Lombard, *L'Abbé du Bos, Initiateur de la Pensée moderne*, Paris, 1913. Du Bos is probably too early to have been influenced by England; but undoubtedly English example had a good deal to do with the rise of Sentimental and Rationalistic æsthetic theories in France in the second and third quarters of the Eighteenth Century. Cf. Joseph Texte, *Jean-Jacques Rousseau et les Origines du Cosmopolitisme Littéraire*, Paris, 1895, Chapter II.

<sup>37</sup> Pierre Estève, *Esprit des Beaux Arts*, Paris, 1753. Ch. III, 43 ff.; 92 ff.

sentiment.”<sup>38</sup> Batteaux declared: “imiter c’est copier un modèle;”<sup>39</sup> but the “model” turns out to be the existing world, the historic world or the fabulous world.<sup>40</sup> The rationalistic spirit of *l’Encyclopédie*, furthermore, manifested in the psychological investigations of the Abbé de Condillac<sup>41</sup> was inclined to ignore imitation; and Montesquieu<sup>42</sup> and Voltaire<sup>43</sup> agreed in making taste the result of our analysis of æsthetic impressions: the authority of Aristotle and his Renaissance commentators was being replaced by an effort at scientific investigation. The vogue of Longinus, moreover, whose treatise *On the Sublime* went through at least a dozen British editions during the century,<sup>44</sup> and the rise of interest in Plato and Neo-

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 60, 68, etc.

<sup>39</sup> Charles Batteaux, *Principes de la Littérature*, Paris, 1802, I, 16 ff. The complete edition, according to the *Brit. Mus. Cat.* appeared in 1764, and was augmented in 1774-88.

<sup>40</sup> Batteaux applied this theory to painting, sculpture, dancing, music and poetry. In a long note, he attacked Schlegel for excluding the dance from among the “imitative” arts. He gives no satisfactory explanation as to how music can be “imitative.”

<sup>41</sup> Condillac’s work seems to have been very influential in England. His *Origin of Human Knowledge* was translated by Thomas Nugent in 1756. The *Critical* reviewed it at great length, II, 193-219. In general, he looks at the arts from the standpoint of psychology; and he casts aside imitation, except for the imitation of the passions in music, p. 222 *et al. loc.* Cf. Léon Dewaule, *Condillac et la Psychologie Anglaise Contemporaine*, 84 ff.

<sup>42</sup> Montesquieu, *Œuvres Complètes*, ed. Laboulaye, Paris, 1879, VII, 116. The *Essai sur le Goût* was posthumously published in *l’Encyclopédie*, ed. 1775, VII, s. v.; but it doubtless represents the views of the entire group for many years before.

<sup>43</sup> Voltaire, *Œuvres Complètes*, Paris, 1879, XIX, 270 ff. This article first appeared in *l’Encyclopédie*, ed. 1757, VII, s. v.

<sup>44</sup> The *Brit. Mus. Cat.* lists one edition of the Greek text alone, Oxford, 1718, a translation into Latin by J. Hudson, Oxford, 1710, a “third edition” in 1730 and another at Edinburgh in 1733. Another translation into Latin by Z. Pearce appeared at least eight

Platonism,<sup>45</sup> did not contribute to support any contracted and false theory of *μίμησις*.

As early as the fourth decade of the century, writers can be found who ignored "imitation" entirely,<sup>46</sup> but more common are those who discuss imitation either to attack, to limit, or to re-define it. A rather large number of authors rejected "imitation" entirely in its more extreme interpretation of copying models. As early as 1713, Felton in his *Dissertation on the Classics* had advised that the aspiring author "imbibe their Sense" without "tying himself up to an Imitation of any of them; much less to copy or transcribe them."<sup>47</sup> Blackwall praised Theocritus for having "the Air of genteel Negligence and unforced Easiness which no Study or Imitation can reach."<sup>48</sup> In 1724, Welsted declared: "Imitation is the Bane of Writing, nor ever was a good Author, that en-

times in England, 1724, 1732, 1751, 1752, 1763, 1773, 1778, and at least once in Amsterdam, 1733. English translations from the French of Boileau were common; there were besides one by Welsted, 1712, 1724, and one by Smith, sec. ed., 1743, 1751, 1756, and 1770. References to Longinus are numerous in writers on æsthetic theory; and Edward Burnaby Greene incorporated *Observations on the Sublime* in his *Critical Essays*, London, 1760 [1770?]. J. Churton Collins briefly discusses the vogue in *Longinus and Greek Criticism, Studies in Poetry and Criticism*, London, 1905, 215 ff.

<sup>45</sup> Plato's influence on Harris' *Three Treatises* is noted by Sarah Coleridge. S. T. Coleridge's *Works*, New York, 1853, III, 391.

<sup>46</sup> For example, Henry Brooke, *Universal Beauty*, 1735. He seems to be under the influence of Shaftesbury and Hutcheson. See also Anselm Bayly, *Introduction to Languages*. London, 1758, 102. His work shows the influence of Longinus, and favors original genius.

<sup>47</sup> Henry Felton, *A Dissertation on Reading the Classics and Forming a Just Style*, 5th ed., London, 1753, 33 ff. The ed. princ. appeared in 1713.

<sup>48</sup> Anthony Blackwell, *Introduction to the Classics*, London, 1746, 21. Ed. princ. 1718.

tirely formed himself on the Model of another. . . ." <sup>49</sup> Fielding would have nothing of "the abominable rules of Aristotle." <sup>50</sup> Byrom pointed out the danger of imitating faults as well as good qualities; and he adds that, even when the archetypes are of the best, "Barely to imitate is not so well." <sup>51</sup> Lloyd ridiculed the whole process:

While those who grasp at reputation,  
From imitating imitation,  
Shall hunt each cranny, nook and creek,  
For precious fragments from the Greek,  
And rob the spital and the waste,  
For sense and sentiment and taste.<sup>52</sup>

Young found two kinds of "imitation," one of nature, one of authors; and he devoted several pages to a comparison, much to the disadvantage of the latter. <sup>53</sup> Armstrong thought the copying of models of use only for the tyro. <sup>54</sup> Greene put the case at length:

The garden of Criticism has almost constantly been over-run with the weeds of Ill-management. The earlier laborers, who have ranged its walks with a methodical exactness, have sacrificed beauty to decorum, while the finical conceits of modern refinement have turned

<sup>49</sup> Leonard Welsted, *A Dissertation concerning the Perfection of the English Language*, in Durham, *op. cit.*, I, 377.

<sup>50</sup> Henry Fielding, *Covent-Garden Journal*, No. LXI, Aug. 29, 1752, ed. Jenson, New Haven, 1915, II, 93.

<sup>51</sup> John Byrom, *Epistle to a Friend on the Art of English Poetry*, in Alexander Chalmers, *English Poets*, London, 1810, xv, 213.

<sup>52</sup> Robert Lloyd, *The Poetry Professors* in Chalmers, *op. cit.*, xv, 79.

<sup>53</sup> Edward Young, *Conjectures on Original Composition*, London, 1759, 9. Cf. J. L. Kind, *Edward Young in Germany*, New York, 1906, Chapter I; and cf. M. W. Steinke, *Edward Young's "Conjectures on Original Composition" in England and Germany*, New York, 1917, 10 ff. Kind is inclined to overestimate the novelty both of Young's ideas and of his influence in Germany. Steinke corrects these impressions.

<sup>54</sup> Launcelot Temple, *pseud.* for John Armstrong, *Sketches*, London, 1758, 44 ff. See also *Mon. Rev.* XVIII, 580 ff.

them into an open lawn, preserving only in favorite corners some inelegant ornaments. . . .<sup>55</sup>

Sterne felt that the truth of imitation in both painting and poetry should, if needs must, be sacrificed to beauty.<sup>56</sup> *The Circle of the Sciences* declared that "the rules observed by ancient poets" do not apply;<sup>57</sup> and, in 1781, Cowper unequivocally stated: "Imitation even of the best models, is my aversion; it is servile and mechanical, a trick that has enabled many to usurp the name of author. . . ." <sup>58</sup>

The repudiation of models was intimately connected with the discussion of "imitation" as a transcript of Nature; and a large number of writers, especially in the mid-century, tried to adjust this conception to *dicta* borrowed from Sentimental or from Rationalistic sources. Dacier had opened the way by his vague definition of "imitation;" and Addison had excepted "the fairy way of writing" from all ordinary rules.<sup>59</sup> Trapp and Pemberton were disturbed that Aristotle had made "action" the subject of "imitation." The former extended imitation to include the copying of static objects;<sup>60</sup> the latter declared art to be the imitation of men, and called Aristotle "this presumed oracle of criticism."<sup>61</sup> Brown admitted degrees

<sup>55</sup> Edward Burnaby Greene, *Critical Essays*, London [1770?], i ff. As his notes show, Greene is deeply indebted to Longinus.

<sup>56</sup> Lawrence Sterne, *Tristram Shandy*, Vol. II, Chap. IV. He adds, however, that this is to be understood "*cum grano salis*."

<sup>57</sup> *The Circle of the Sciences*, London, 1776, 95.

<sup>58</sup> William Cowper, *Correspondence*, ed. Wright, London, 1904, I, 386.

<sup>59</sup> *Spectator*, No. 419.

<sup>60</sup> Joseph Trapp, Prof. of Poetry at Oxford, *Prælectiones Poeticæ*, London, 1736, I, 26-31. The book was translated under the title, *Lectures on Poetry*, London, 1742.

<sup>61</sup> Henry Pemberton, *Observations on Poetry*, London, 1738, 5-7. This is a characteristically Neo-classical variation of Aristotle to conform with Pope's dictum: "The proper study of mankind is Man."

of imitation in various arts, according to their ability to give a literal transcript of life. He found tragedy more imitative than epic, and pure description the most imitative of all poetry.<sup>62</sup> According to Francklin, all that "Art hath called her own" is imitation:

Great Nature only is Original.<sup>63</sup>

The late '50's and the early '60's are full of discussion of "imitation." Joseph Warton took a stand<sup>64</sup> somewhat similar to that of Trapp and Pemberton, and applied "imitation" to "the internal constitution of man," to "characters and manners and sentiments."<sup>65</sup> Burke, on the other hand, felt that no poetry but dramatic could be classed as "strictly imitation."<sup>66</sup> Hume sought the basis of good taste in the critic's delicacy of imagination.<sup>67</sup> Dr. Johnson's common-sense Neo-classicism disapproved entirely of anything smacking of plagiarism; he expressed doubt about the copying of models—although he indulged in it himself in *London*, and he allowed extensive borrow-

<sup>62</sup> John Brown, *Essays on the Characteristics*, London, 1751, 19-20. Perhaps this latter attitude together with the veneration for Aristotle, helps to explain the vogue of descriptive poetry in the Eighteenth Century.

<sup>63</sup> Thomas Francklin, *Translation a Poem*, London [1753], 8. He also treats of imitation as translation and copying of approved masterpieces. Francklin was Professor of Greek at Cambridge.

<sup>64</sup> Perhaps this implies a more conscious consideration of the subject than Warton actually gave. As a matter of fact, many of the interpretations here quoted are chance *obiter dicta*, thrown off on the spur of an occasion. They serve, however, to illustrate the general attitude toward imitation.

<sup>65</sup> Joseph Warton, *Essay on Pope*, London, 1756, 51.

<sup>66</sup> Edmund Burke, *Philosophical Inquiry into the Sublime and the Beautiful*, London, 1757, 29, 179 ff.

<sup>67</sup> David Hume, *Four Dissertations*, London, 1757. The *Monthly Rev.* gave it a long and rather appreciative review, xvi, 122-140.

ing.<sup>68</sup> Armstrong tried to conciliate "imitation" of Nature with a thoroughly sentimental theory of art: he paints the genius as a paragon of moral and æsthetic sensibility, and gives him the task of depicting the passions and emotions of Man.<sup>69</sup> Gerard thought that "exactness of resemblance" could "degenerate into disagreeable servility."<sup>70</sup> Goldsmith, in like manner, expressed the opinion: "It is the business of art to imitate nature, but not with a servile pencil."<sup>71</sup> Webb tried to classify the arts according to their ability to imitate, and found painting inferior to poetry and music inferior to painting.<sup>72</sup> Ogilvie quoted Dacier's vague definition, and referred the reader to his translation of the *Poetics*.<sup>73</sup> Lord Kames

<sup>68</sup> *Rambler*, No. 143. Johnson's objections to plagiarism probably arose, not from any dislike of literary imitation but from disgust at the thievery of book-sellers. Some of his *Idler* papers appear to have been stolen. See his letter of protest to the *Univ. Chron.* 1759, 149.

<sup>69</sup> L. Temple, *pseud.*, *op. cit.*, 4 ff.

<sup>70</sup> Alexander Gerard, *Essay on Taste*, London, 1759, 49-56. The reference to Hutcheson's *Inquiry* suggests that Sentimentalism accounts for his unwillingness to subscribe to utter Neo-classical copying. Gerard's *Essay* was "very well received in London" according to Hume. Hume to Robertson, May 29, 1759, in Dugald Stewart, *Life of Robertson*, London, 1802, 252.

<sup>71</sup> O. Goldsmith, *Works*, N. Y., 1850, I, 275, Essay XVIII, *On the Cultivation of Taste*, et seq. This sounds like a rather liberal view of *μυμῆσις*; but the second clause turns out to mean only that the artist is to avoid the disgusting. These essays first appeared in *The Bee*, 1761-2-3.

<sup>72</sup> Daniel Webb, *Remarks on the Beauties of Poetry*, London, 1762, 102 n. q.

<sup>73</sup> John Ogilvie, *Poems*, London, 1762, vii ff. In his *Philosophical and Critical Observations on Composition*, London, 1774, I, 295-6, Ogilvie took up the matter again. He referred "imitation" either directly to sense impressions or to "such materials as are more generally supplied by reflection and experience." He seems to have had in mind a less stringent copying; but it was hardly a creative expression of the Universal.

distinguished at least two different sorts of imitation, epic and dramatic;<sup>74</sup> and Akenside, in 1763, called imitation of models only as a "secondary pleasure" in works of imagination, but seemed to consider all art a mere transcript of Nature: ". . . painting and sculpture directly copy external appearances . . . music and poetry bring them back to remembrance by signs universally established and understood."<sup>75</sup>

During the last third of the century, "imitation" lost ground very rapidly. Hurd found poetry "above all *other modes of imitation*," because it "conveys distinct and clear notices of this class of *moral and religious* conceptions;"<sup>76</sup> but he looks to "experience" as the material upon which the mind of the artist is to work. In 1772, Sir William Jones seemed to attach a certain slur to "imitation," and he tried to prove from an examination of their origins that poetry and music are not imitative arts.<sup>77</sup> Aikin called "imitation" "as great an air of reality as possible," and in this sense applied it especially to descriptive poetry.<sup>78</sup> Mason felt that "imitation" should

<sup>74</sup> Henry Home, Lord Kames (or Kaimes), *Elements of Criticism*, 2nd ed., "with additions and improvements," Edinburgh, 1763, III, 244-5. The *Preface* is dated 1761.

<sup>75</sup> Mark Akenside, *Pleasures of the Imagination*, London, 1884, I, 46.

<sup>76</sup> Richard Hurd, *On Poetical Imitation*, Works, London, 1811, II, 171-2. He says: (p. 176) "The *objects* of imitation, like the *materials* of human knowledge, are a common stock, which experience furnishes to all men. And it is in the *operations* of the mind upon them, that the glory of *poetry*, as of *science* consists." This seems like an idealistic, and almost Shelleyan, view of poetry, until one notes, from the passage quoted in the text, that to Hurd the most important of these "*operations* of the mind" are of the didactic sort, to convey "distinct and clear notices . . . of moral and religious conceptions."

<sup>77</sup> Sir William Jones, *Poems*, Oxford, 1772, Essay II, *On the Arts Commonly Called Imitative*, 201-2.

<sup>78</sup> John Aikin, *Essays on Song-Writing*, 2nd ed., Warrington 1774, 7-8.



be supplemented by "the original."<sup>79</sup> In 1782, the *Monthly* declared itself against copyist poets who confine themselves "like packhorses, to the same beaten track;"<sup>80</sup> and in the same year hedged on the application of *μίμησις* to comedy;<sup>81</sup> and by 1809 Walker classified theatrical "representations" according to "their effects upon the heart;" and, although he quoted and discussed the Abbé du Bos, he managed largely to ignore Aristotelian "imitation."<sup>82</sup>

During the first third of the century, "imitation" was triumphant, especially in the guise of copying models; during the second third, this interpretation gave place in most writers to "imitation" of Nature. The Aristotelian theory was sharply criticized; and numerous efforts were made to adjust it to Sentimental theories of æsthetics and to the psychological and historical contributions of the Rationalistic philosophers. Some critics, like Pemberton, limited "imitation" to the copying of certain types of things; some, like Burke, applied the term only to certain *genera* or species of art, or like Goldsmith and Lord Kames, admitted kinds or degrees of "imitation;" and some, like Gerard, felt vaguely that "imitation" could "degenerate into disagreeable servility." During the last third of the century, "imitation" became a less and less vital part of literary criticism.

The æsthetic problem, moreover, quickly made itself evident in other arts. The "Ut pictura poesis" of Horace had long united painting and poetry as imitative arts of a like nature.<sup>83</sup> Painting itself was looked

<sup>79</sup> William Mason, *Works*, London, 1811, I, 315-6.

<sup>80</sup> *Mon. Rev.*, LXVII, 262.

<sup>81</sup> B. Walwyn, *Essay on Comedy*, see *Mon. Rev.*, LXVI, 308-9.

<sup>82</sup> George Walker, *Essays*, London, 1809, 41 ff.

<sup>83</sup> For a tracing of this æsthetic alliance, see W. G. Howard, *Ut Pictura Poesis*, *Publ. Mod. Lang. Assoc.*, XXIV, 40 ff.

upon as the handmaid of history;<sup>84</sup> and, even in making contemporary portraits and landscapes the painter strove for a copy, the closer the better, of objective reality. Even Shaftesbury accepted this view, and implied that painting is the mere adjunct of sculpture<sup>85</sup> or of poetry. Addison mentioned painting as one of the arts that depended for its effect on copying life.<sup>86</sup> Welsted objected to the copying of one painting by another; but he leaves one to infer that he saw nothing in originals but the reproduction of external objects.<sup>87</sup> During the entire century, Dufresnoy's *De Arte Graphica*, translated by Dryden and others and annotated by de Piles and Sir Joshua Reynolds, was a paramount influence upon the æsthetics of painting.<sup>88</sup> Although he does not wish to "fetter Genius," Dufresnoy is strongly classical:

<sup>84</sup> The classicists of course looked upon historical painting as painting *par excellence*. In this way the art became subservient to a literary text actual or implied. The situation is well illustrated in T. Rowlandson's *The Historian Animating the Mind of a Young Painter*, reproduced in George Paston's *Social Caricature of the Eighteenth Century*, plate cvl.

<sup>85</sup> Lord Shaftesbury, *Second Characters*, ed. Rand, Cambridge (Eng.), 1914, 117, "Statuary the mother art to painting," and 167, "A painter therefore must imitate the dramatic and scenical, not the epic and merely recitative poet."

<sup>86</sup> *Spectator*, No. 416. The essential difficulty with this point of view is the definition the Neo-classicists gave to "life": They took little account of color and almost none of light and air.

<sup>87</sup> Leonard Welsted, *The State of Poetry*, in Durham, *op. cit.*, I, 377.

<sup>88</sup> The poem was composed at Rome between 1633 and 1653 and first published in 1668, annotated by Roger de Piles. Dryden made a translation in 1695; J. Wright, in 1728; James Willis, in 1754; and William Mason in 1781. To Mason's translation Sir Joshua Reynolds added notes. For bibliography on Dufresnoy and his influence, see Paul Vitry, *De C. A. Dufresnoy Pictoris Poemate quod "De Arte Graphica" inscribitur*, diss., U. of Paris, Paris, 1901; and see L. Gillet, *La Peinture, XVII et XVIII Siècles*, Paris, 1913, 314 ff. The influence of Pliny's *Nat. Hist.*, *Lib. xxx*, was also important.

Præcipua imprimis artisque potissima pars est,  
 Nōsse quid in rebus natura creārit ad artem  
 Pulchrius, idque modum juxta, mentemque vetustam. . .<sup>90</sup>

Harte, who claims to have written independently of Dufresnoy, arrived at the same conclusion, and spoke of "a Titian or a Pope" as "The forming glory of a thousand years."<sup>90</sup> At last, however, this facile theory was challenged; and Hogarth wrote his *Analysis* without even mentioning "imitation" in his list of "principles" that "co-operate in the production of beauty."<sup>91</sup> The old opinion, nevertheless, still persisted; and John Scott spoke of painting as "mimic Being."<sup>92</sup> "Imitation" was applied to various things, and defended in various ways. Webb based his Romantic apology for color on a Neo-classical appeal to vivid "imitation."<sup>93</sup> Count Algarotti urged imitation of a general style or manner, like the poetic imitations of Horace or Virgil;<sup>94</sup> and Pott, in direct contradiction, lamented that the English "have contented themselves with imitating the ideas of other masters when they should have copied nature only."<sup>95</sup> Sir Joshua Reynolds, with the attitude of the professional creator rather than of the literary theorist, advised the artist to follow

<sup>90</sup> William Mason, *Works*, ed. cit., III, 26, ll. 37-40.

<sup>91</sup> Walter Harte, *Essay on Painting*, Chalmers, op. cit., XVI, 320.

<sup>92</sup> William Hogarth, *Analysis of Beauty*, London, 1753, 12. Hogarth agreed with Welsted in objecting to the copying of masterpieces; and Thomas Bardwell in his *Practice of Painting*, London, 1756, defended both not only in the trade but also as a pedagogical method. See *Mon. Rev.*, xv, 284 ff.

<sup>93</sup> John Scott, *Essay on Painting* [c. 1770?]. Chalmers calls the work Scott's "feeblest effort," op. cit., XVII, 451.

<sup>94</sup> Daniel Webb, *Inquiry into the Beauties of Painting*, London, 1760, 1761, 1769, 1777, p. 70.

<sup>95</sup> Count Algarotti, *Essay on Painting*, translated into English, London, 1774, 171.

<sup>96</sup> J. H. Pott, *Essay on Landscape Painting*, London, 1782.

Nature, but not "at second hand;"<sup>96</sup> and by following Nature he did not mean servile copying; for he tells us to proceed from a model and to depart from it,<sup>97</sup> and his concept of the creative impulse was essentially spiritual.<sup>98</sup> Reynolds would doubtless have denied that his art, in such a sense, was "imitative."<sup>99</sup> In short, "imitation" came into painting in both senses: the copying of models and of external Nature. Hogarth, however, ignored it; and Reynolds left room for pure creation.

In music, the revolt was earlier and much more determinate; for "imitation," in either of the contemporary senses, applies to it but poorly. There seems to have been no attempt to introduce the copying of accepted masterpieces; but a number of writers—especially those whose knowledge of the art was limited—tried to make music merely an imitation of human feelings or of natural sounds. Addison attempted to justify it by the "imperfect notions" that it raises and by its power to "set the hearers in the heat and hurry of battle" or to "overcast their minds with melancholy scenes and apprehensions of deaths and funerals."<sup>100</sup> Armstrong declared that all

<sup>96</sup> *Vide* Reynolds' *Notes* to Mason's translation of Dufresnoy's *De Arte Graphica*, Mason's *Works*, III, 101 ff. For an analysis at length of Sir Joshua's point of view, see E. N. S. Thompson, *Discourses of Sir Joshua Reynolds*, *Publ. Mod. Lang. Assoc.*, XXXII, 339 ff.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, 105-6.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, 140.

<sup>99</sup> The utter decadence of stained glass in the Eighteenth Century is largely explained as part of the general distaste for Gothic. An additional reason, however, is the dominance of "imitation" over æsthetic theory. The materials and the purpose of glass-painting make Realistic portrayal of Nature ineffective if not impossible; and the copying of models intrenches the pictorial technique, proper to canvas and fresco, which has so injured the glass of the Renaissance.

<sup>100</sup> *Spectator*, No. 416. As Hawkins very truly pointed out, *History of Music*, London, 1776, I, v ff., Shaftesbury, Temple and Addison knew very little about music.

music imitated the passions, and ruled out "mere Harmony" as being no more music than versification is poetry.<sup>101</sup> Moor also seems to apply "imitation" to music;<sup>102</sup> and Busby declared that music, when it tries to represent "operations of nature, art or human passion; as the rolling of thunder . . . the clashing of swords . . . and the tones of sorrow, love . . . or triumph . . . ; exerts some of its sublimest energies; transports us to the very scenes it describes, or kindles the feeling of those expressions it copies."<sup>103</sup>

Much more commonly, however, even those writers who might have insisted on poetry and painting as "imitative," were inclined to make an exception of music. Among these may be numbered several really competent critics. Dacier admitted that "players on the Flute and Harp, play often on those Instruments, without Imitating anything."<sup>104</sup> Hutcheson, in interpreting Shaftesbury, likewise made allowance for absolute music.<sup>105</sup> Avison, who wrote with professional knowledge, declared himself opposed to copying, and called the composer "culpable" who, "for the Sake of some low and trifling *Imitation*, deserted the Beauties of Expression."<sup>106</sup> The Italian librettist Metastasio, whose vogue was considerable in

<sup>101</sup> L. Temple, pseud., *op. cit.*, 26 ff.

<sup>102</sup> James Moor, *Essays*, Glasgow, 1759, 3, 133 ff.

<sup>103</sup> Thomas Busby, *A Complete Dictionary of Music*, London [1800?], s. v.

<sup>104</sup> Dacier, *op. cit.*, 7. According to his view, some music, on the other hand, represents an "Action or a Passion." 6-7.

<sup>105</sup> Hutcheson, *op. cit.* 25.

<sup>106</sup> Sir Charles Avison, *Essay on Musical Expression*, London, 1752, 61, 90 etc. Watt in *Bibl. Brit.* suggests that Brown supplied the content of this work—an improbable theory in view of his attitude toward imitation in his *History of Poetry*. See following.

England,<sup>107</sup> excepted music from among the imitative arts.<sup>108</sup> Harris, whose *Three Treatises* appeared in 1744, and passed into their fifth edition in 1792, tried to reconcile Aristotle to Shaftesbury: painting and poetry he called "imitative" in that they copy Nature; but of music he was obliged to make an exception.<sup>109</sup> Sir William Jones, also, could find no "imitation" in music;<sup>110</sup> but his *Treatise of the Art of Music*<sup>111</sup> seems to allow imitation, a stand to which the reviewer took definite exception.<sup>112</sup> Burney, the greatest musical critic of the age, discussed the theory of his art "unshackled by the trammels of authority,"<sup>113</sup> and hardly referred to imitation,

<sup>107</sup> The *Brit. Mus. Cat.* lists twenty-six English editions before 1800 of various libretti by Metastasio, some set to music, some with Italian text, some with English, some with both. This includes Arne's famous setting of *Artaxerxes* which passed through at least seven editions before 1800 and four more during the fifteen years following. There is also Anna Williams' *The Uninhabited Island*, 1766 (*L'Isola Desabitata*), not listed in *Brit. Mus. Cat.* Hoole translated his *Works* in 1767 (another ed. 1800); some of his *Poems* appeared, Coventry, 1790, his sonnets, 1795; Burney published his *Life* in 1796 (sec. ed. 1810). His fame extended throughout the first half of the Nineteenth Century.

<sup>108</sup> Pietro Metastasio, *Opere*, Florence, 1831, XIII, 37. But he called poetry "imitative" because it expresses emotions and embellishes Nature, *ibid.*, 25. *A priori*, we might expect one like Metastasio who was accustomed to think of music in conjunction with words, to urge the imitating of the words by the music; but it is to be remembered that the composers of Italian *opera seria* of the Eighteenth Century, the musicians with whom Metastasio came in contact, regularly sacrificed relation of sense and sound—and even coherence of organic structure—to opportunities of vocal display for the *prima donna* and *primo uomo*.

<sup>109</sup> James Harris, *Three Treatises*, London, 1764, 95.

<sup>110</sup> Sir William Jones, *Poems*, Oxford, 1772, 201-2.

<sup>111</sup> W. Jones, *Treatise of the Art of Music*, London, 1786, *Preface*.

<sup>112</sup> *Monthly Rev.*, LXXV, 105 ff.

<sup>113</sup> Charles Burney, *A General History of Music*, London, 1776-89, *Preface*, I, xiii.

even in treating of opera and oratorio.<sup>114</sup> The historian Hawkins, who allowed painting to be entirely imitative, and poetry largely so, ruled out music almost altogether.<sup>115</sup> By degrees the opinion spread from professional circles into the intellectual world at large; and, in 1778, the poet Beattie felt certain that music could not be classed as an imitative art.<sup>116</sup> By 1789, music was no longer looked upon necessarily as a copy of either natural sounds or human passions; and Bayly declared it the basis of poetry and oratory and the criterion by which they should be judged:<sup>117</sup> music had emerged from a dependent to a predominant æsthetic position.

Music as such cannot, indeed, be called imitative; but, ever since the days of Gluck and certainly since those of Wagner and Schubert, vocal and dramatic music have been thought of as the close associates, if not actual imitations, of their texts. The vocal and even the operatic settings of the early and middle Eighteenth Century are almost unrelated to the accompanying words; but a few writers, even of that period, anticipated in their theories the music of the Nineteenth Century. Most important of these was Rousseau. In his *Dictionary of Music*, which

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 153 ff.

<sup>115</sup> In a long note, Hawkins gives a list—to which additions might easily be made from Haydn's *Creation* and other well-known works of the period—of musical imitations of natural sounds, scenes and events; "but these powers of imitation," he adds, "... constitute but a very small part of the excellence of music. Hawkins, *General History of Music*, London, 1776, *Preliminary Discourse*, I, ii-iii.

<sup>116</sup> James Beattie, *Essays*, London, 1778, 128. See also Sir William Forbes, *Life of Beattie*, London, 1806, 542.

<sup>117</sup> Anselm Bayly, *The Alliance of Music, Poetry and Oratory*, London, 1789, 2. Of course, there were still exponents of the more conservative attitude; and, in the same year, the *Monthly*, I (n. s.), 38, objected to the idea that music was "the first and immediate thought of Nature."

reached its second English edition in 1779, he pointed out:

La musique dramatique ou théâtrale concourt à *l'imitation*, ainsi que la poésie et la peinture: c'est à ce principe commun qui se rapportent tous les beaux-arts, comme l'a montré M. Le Batteux.<sup>118</sup>

And because dramatic music is "imitative," he exalts it above all music that is not.<sup>119</sup> At least one contemporary English writer suggested the same point of view. Webb urged that poetry be united with music in order that the latter might be truly imitative.<sup>120</sup> Brown tried to defend instrumental music, and declared:

Musical *Instruments* . . . are but *Imitations* of the human Voice, or of other natural Sounds, produced gradually by frequent Trial and Experiment.<sup>121</sup>

In the 1780's, Mason thought that "music as an imitative art" was so far inferior to poetry and painting, that it could "hardly be so termed with propriety;"<sup>122</sup> but he elsewhere urged that sacred music should reproduce the cadence and meaning of the text.<sup>123</sup> Gluck was even then struggling for instrumental recognition of libretti; but the theory was not fully accepted and developed until the Nineteenth Century, and then without any thought of Aristotle or of *μίμησις*.

<sup>118</sup> J. J. Rousseau, *Œuvres*, Paris, 1824, XII, *Dictionnaire de la Musique*, I, 376 ff.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*, *Sub Harmonie*, 365.

<sup>120</sup> Webb, *op. cit.*, 102, n. q. Webb's *Remarks* appeared in 1762; and the *ed. princ.* of Rousseau's *Dictionary* in 1767.

<sup>121</sup> Brown, *History of Poetry*, Newcastle, 1764, 12. This work also antedates Rousseau. His theory seems to be that instrumental music originally arose as an imitation of the human voice. The facts of primitive life do not seem to support it.

<sup>122</sup> Mason, *Works*, London, 1811, III, 287. This *Essay* first appeared at York, 1795.

<sup>123</sup> Mason, *op. cit.*, III, 393 ff. The idea appears throughout his four *Essays* on music.



The application of Aristotle to music was, on the whole, that which gave the most trouble throughout the Eighteenth Century. The canons and fugues of Bach, the Handel and Haydn symphonies, even the opera, music that pleased by no pictorial or emotional quality but by sheer beauty of design, in short, absolute music, was characteristic of the age; and absolute music could not be justified as any form of copying. At last, a reinterpretation of Aristotle came in the light of his exaltation of music as an "imitative" art. In 1789, Twining brought out his *Aristotle's Treatise on Poetry, translated with notes, and Two Dissertations on Poetical and Musical Imitation*. He was well read in the æsthetic philosophers of the school of Shaftesbury and Rousseau.<sup>124</sup> He was deeply interested in music and an intimate friend of Burney.<sup>125</sup> He was an accomplished Grecian,<sup>126</sup> and had become interested in Aristotle on music as early as 1761. He seems to have started to work seriously about 1779,<sup>127</sup> and he published ten years later.

*The Dissertation on Poetry Considered as an Imitative*

<sup>124</sup> His interest in Rowley, in Percy's *Reliques* and in Welsh scenery shows him abreast of the rising tide of Romanticism; the titles of two of his published sermons (see *Brit. Mus. Cat.* and *Mon. Rev.*, LXXVII, 176) show a philosophic background in Shaftesbury and Hutcheson; and he refers in his notes to the writings of Rousseau and Hutcheson, and criticises Lord Kaimes, Harris, Beattie and Avison.

<sup>125</sup> He and Burney exchanged letters; Burney asserted that Twining's "least merit" was "being perfectly acquainted with every branch of theoretical and practical music," and, furthermore, Burney relied on him for much of the Greek and Latin material in his *History of Music*. Burney, *op. cit.*, I, xix.

<sup>126</sup> Dr. Parr said that his Greek scholarship was excelled by "no critic of his day." See *Recreations and Studies of a Country Gentleman*, London, 1882, 11-12. This book contains a *Memoir of Twining* and a number of letters.

<sup>127</sup> *Recreations and Studies*, 14, 57.

*Art*, points out that poetry by its onomatopœia and by its denotative and connotative faculties, can represent, portray, "imitate," both objective sense-impressions and subjective feelings and passions. This attitude is at once liberal and definite; and the inclusion of feeling as an object of imitation largely relieves *μίμησις* of the stigma of the photographic, but it gives instead a sentimental tinge, certainly not inherent in Aristotle or in the idea of creating art according to Universal Truth. The *Dissertation on Musical Imitation* is even more significant. To music, he assigned "three distinct effects:" an effect upon the ear, in "simply delighting the *sense*;" an effect upon the passions, in "raising the *emotions*;" and an effect upon the "imagination," in "raising ideas." An analysis of this first type, which he dismissed as merely sensuous, comparing it to the "smell of a rose" or the "flavor of a pineapple," might have led him to the idealistic sense that Aristotle seems to have intended;<sup>128</sup> but, unfortunately, he passed rapidly on to a discussion of the second category, the emotional power of music. By the third type, he understood program-music, that which copies directly sounds or motions or things; and he agreed with the large body of æsthetic critics in finding it very "imperfect."<sup>129</sup> It was music as an emotional force that ap-

<sup>128</sup> Of course, such musical literature is not to be classified with the mere "flavor of a pineapple." Schopenhauer recognized this; and it was probably to absolute music that he referred when he declared that Music *was* the Will, the essence of life, whereas the other arts merely pictured it. *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*, Leipzig, 1873, II, 512. Schopenhauer's view was largely anticipated by Bayly, *op. cit.*, 2: "Music, indeed, if traced to its origin, will be found the first and immediate daughter of nature, while poetry and oratory are only near relations of music, mere imitations of nature. . . ."

<sup>129</sup> He very justly remarked that a musical resemblance "cannot be seen till it is, in some sort, pointed out," and that "even when it is so, it is not very evident."

pealed to Twining. Whereas such a writer as Bysshe represents the thorough Neo-classicizing of "imitation," Twining uses the same word largely emptied of its former meaning, emotionalized and sentimentalized in conformity with the Romantic *Zeitgeist*.

Twining's Aristotle re-appeared in 1812 and 1851; and the *Dissertations* were widely read. The *Monthly* gave it a long and enthusiastic review.<sup>130</sup> In the early 1790's, Mason referred to "Twining" as if the work were a recognized standard.<sup>131</sup> Cowper mentioned "Mr. Twining's valuable volume," and found the writer "sensible, elegant and entertaining."<sup>132</sup> More recent scholarship has taken cognizance of Twining.<sup>133</sup> Moore,<sup>134</sup> Sandys,<sup>135</sup> Bywater,<sup>136</sup> and Carroll<sup>137</sup> have recognized his importance.<sup>138</sup> Alison's two sorts of "imitation," that of "beautiful forms" and that of "Passions or Affections,"<sup>139</sup> and Hazlitt's idea of imitation applied especial-

<sup>130</sup> *Mon. Rev.*, IV (N. S.), 383-8; VII, 121. The reviewer did not, however, pay particular attention to "imitation."

<sup>131</sup> William Mason, *Works*, London, 1811, III, 287. Mason brackets Twining and Harris; and he seems to fail to realize that the two are not altogether agreeable in their interpretations. Mason, in his text, seems to follow Harris.

<sup>132</sup> William Cowper, *Letters*, *op. cit.*, III, 372-3.

<sup>133</sup> Tyrwhitt made no mention of Twining, apparently thinking a mere translator beneath his notice. T. Tyrwhitt ed., *De Poetica Aristotelis*, London, 1794.

<sup>134</sup> Edward Moore, Aristoteles, *περί ποιητικῆς*, Oxford, 1875, *Preface*.

<sup>135</sup> J. E. Sandys, *Hist. of Classical Scholarship*, Cambridge, 1908, II, 420-1.

<sup>136</sup> I. Bywater, *Aristotle on the Art of Poetry*, Oxford, 1909, *Preface*, x.

<sup>137</sup> M. Carroll, reviewing Bywater in the *Am. Jour. of Philol.*, XXXII, 86.

<sup>138</sup> None of these writers, however, seem to appreciate the importance of Twining's work on "imitation."

<sup>139</sup> A. Allison, *Essays on Taste*, London, 1790. Blair, on the other hand, seems to lapse back to the idea of "imitation" as a mere copy.

ly to man's imagination and passions,<sup>140</sup> probably derive from him; but the Romantic Movement, even as early as the 1790's, was too much interested in original genius to care for Aristotle—even interpreted according to its own views.<sup>141</sup> The historical criticism of Warton and Ritson was not primarily interested in him; and the psychological criticism of Lord Kames and of Priestley looked to the empirical sciences for a basis of æsthetic judgment.<sup>142</sup> The Neo-Platonic critics,<sup>143</sup> moreover, and the impressionistic followers of Longinus<sup>144</sup> cared little about imitation. Upon creative literature, Twining's work seems to have had no more influence than upon æsthetic theorists, although Coleridge certainly knew of the book, at least

See *Essays on Rhetoric and Science*, Boston, 1793, 209. Knight defined "imitation" vaguely as "the faculty of improved perception." See *Principles of Taste*, London, 1805, 100. Taylor noted three sorts of imitation, corresponding to Plato's three states of the soul: divine, scientific or intellectual, and reproductive in a mere literal fashion. Which of these he conceived Aristotle to have meant, is uncertain. Indeed, he prided himself on leaving *minutiae* to the "critical vermin." See *Aristotle's Poetic*, ed. Taylor, London, 1812, II, viii ff.

<sup>140</sup> William Hazlitt, *On Poetry in General, Lectures*, Philadelphia, 1818, 5.

<sup>141</sup> E. g. George Walker, *Essays on Various Subjects*, London, 1809, II, 76-7.

<sup>142</sup> *Mon. Rev.* LVII, 89 ff. attributes the origination of psychological criticism to Lord Kames. Priestley in his *Lectures on Oratory and Criticism*, London, 1777, followed his lead, and tried to find a more scientific basis in Hartley's psychology.

<sup>143</sup> E. g. Thomas Taylor, translator of Plotinus' *Concerning the Beautiful*, London, 1787.

<sup>144</sup> One of the most notable of these was Thomas Robertson, Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, who, in his *Inquiry Concerning the Fine Arts*, London, 1784, called Scotch folk songs "some of the finest melodies in Europe." The *Review* sneered at them as "ploughman's language," *Mon. Rev.*, LXXIV, 191 ff.

through Pye's *Commentary*;<sup>145</sup> and it may have contributed to his early thought.<sup>146</sup> In Germany, Twining received some immediate recognition. C. H. Heyne, of Göttingen, to whom Tyrwhitt refers as "*vir eruditissimus*,"<sup>147</sup> wrote Twining a long and appreciative letter, in which he declared:

Valde delectavit me opera a te posita in notione *imitationis* accurate constituenda. Turbavit illa vox non minus populares meos: verum nos adsciscimus aliam vocem eamque minus in fallaciam et fraudem indescentem, *Darstellung*. . . .<sup>148</sup>

He promised, moreover, to review the *Dissertations*<sup>149</sup> and to speak of them in a course of lectures; and J. T. Buhle of Göttingen in his *Opera omnia* of Aristotle, published in 1791, made numerous references to "Twiningius" in his *Animadvertiones criticae* of the *Poetics*.

The early Eighteenth Century is the period of the application of the theories of Renaissance scholarship to

<sup>145</sup> H. J. Pye, *A Commentary Illustrating the Poetic of Aristotle*, London, 1792. (Sara Coleridge certainly knew Pye (see her note to *Biog. Lit.*, Coleridge's *Works*, N. Y., 1853, III, 399); and probably Coleridge drew from Pye (182-3), his *obiter dictum* on the perfection of the plot of *Tom Jones* (*Table Talk*, July 5, 1834). Pye refers constantly to Twining, praises him and quotes him especially on "imitation." See Pye, *Preface*, x-xi, 91. It is of interest to note that Pye drew heavily on Lessing's *Hamb. Dram.*, "a work not generally known." *Pref.*, xv.

<sup>146</sup> Of course in his later years, Coleridge went far beyond Twining, and recognized "imitation" as an exalted act of artistic creation. See for example, *Lecture XIII*, *Works*, New York, 1854, iv, 330.

<sup>147</sup> T. Tyrwhitt, *De Poetica Aristotelis*, London, 1794, xi. Heyne was the best classical scholar of the day in Germany.

<sup>148</sup> *Recreations and Studies*, 252.

<sup>149</sup> I have been unable to find anything of this review either in C. G. Heyne, *Opuscula Academia*, Göttingen, 1785-1802, or in A. H. L. Heeren, *Christian Gottlob Heyne, Biographisch Dargestellt*, Göttingen, 1813, bibl. of Heyne's works, 489 ff. I have not had access to a complete file of the *Göttingische gelehrte Anzeigen*.

creative endeavor. The enthusiasm of the Elizabethan Age and the strained affectation of the Jacobean had at last given away before common sense and the "Rules." Neo-classicism saw the triumph of restraint, of authority, of decorum, of all-too-reasonable compromise. "Imitation" received the simplest—and most mistaken—interpretation: in poetry, it meant primarily the copying of models; in painting, the copying of old masters or of natural objects; in music, it was interpreted in any way that the ignorance or the ingenuity of the writer might suggest. There was little room for the emotional, for the ideal, or for artistic progress. But even during the triumph of Neo-classicism, the Sentimental revolt was under way; and, at an early stage, the "imitation" of emotional values was suggested as a justification of poetry and music. During the middle of the century, "imitation" was interpreted and re-interpreted, in an effort to adapt it to Sentimental and to Rationalistic thought. After the 1760's, its definition became only a minor phase of the conflict; for the discredit of "the Rules" carried with it a discredit of all Aristotelian theories. More and more of the writers ignored "imitation" entirely; and the interpretation of Twining, even had it been less timid, would probably have had little actual effect upon either the poets or the æsthetic philosophers. The semantic history of *μίμησις* reflects the period of authority during the first third of the century, and the period, during the middle decades, of scientific inquiry and of sentimental reaction, which later passed into the age of Romantic revolt.

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